



Safety Sense

South Dakota Army National Guard

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SOME PEOPLE STILL DON'T GET IT

Over 6 years ago, President Obama signed an Executive Order effectively banning texting and driving in all government vehicles and personally owned vehicles while on government business. This was not a punitive measure but a risk reduction measure. The simple fact is distracted driving is dangerous, especially for those who are foolish to think they can text and drive better than anyone else. You can't.

You wouldn't consider yourself a good driver if you were to drink a few beers or mixed drinks and hit the road, would you? Distracted driving is just as bad as impaired driving, maybe even worse because most adults know you can't drive well after drinking. But

those same people feel confident, albeit misguided, in their ability to drive distracted.

When we speak of distracted driving, it actually covers more than texting: talking (even hands free is a significant distraction), reading, eating, drinking, applying makeup or using other electric devices (GPS, notepad, MP3/Ipod). They are all distractions, they have all caused accidents, and they have all claimed lives.

Use the good judgement you are known for and put aside all distractions and just drive.



Get home for the holidays, alive. Don't drive distracted..

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN

As winter settles in to the mid-west, snow and ice will be a constant hazard you are going to have to deal with or suffer from. The conditions can and will change, sometimes hourly. What seemed treacherous this morning may be cleared up and safe by lunch time. And the opposite is true as well.

For your protection,

when driving, this time of year, just don't get in a hurry. Leave yourself a margin of time for delays. If you are someplace early, you'll appear to be highly motivated.

When walking, look before you step. On icy surfaces, look for a safer route. If not feasible, then take shorter, more deliberate steps. Reduce the amount of items you carry.

For your facilities, let people know of the hazards that exist, and do everything possible to minimize the risk. Use salt, sand, floor dry or ice melt.

The cost of prevention can be minimal compared to a LOD with significant injury.

FIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE

Don't let Christmas ever heat up too much, with fire that is. Did you know that Christmas trees alone result in 13 million dollars, annually, in property damage? More importantly, these fires present real risk towards family and friends. When showcasing a live tree in your home, the combination of tree dryness, electrical malfunction with lights and poorly located heating sources can make for a deadly combination.

But if your holiday is just not complete without a live tree, follow these safety precautions to keep threats at bay:

Fresh trees are less likely to catch fire, so look for a tree with vibrant green needles that are hard to pluck and don't break easily from its branches. The tree shouldn't be shedding its needles readily.

Always place your tree away from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights and keep the tree base filled with water to avoid a dry out.

Make sure all your indoor and outdoor Christmas lights have been tested by the UL for safety and throw out any damaged lights.

Any lights you use outdoors must be labeled suitable for exterior placement and be sure to plug into a ground-fault circuit interrupter protected receptacle.

Keep all your holiday candles away from your Christmas tree, surrounding furniture and décor.

Bedtime means lights off - don't forget to turn off your Christmas tree light switch each night.



When your tree begins to drop its needles, it's time to say goodbye to your ever-green foliage until next year. So this year, follow our guidelines to avoid being another statistic in the National Fire Protection Association or United States Fire Administration report during the upcoming holiday season.



From the staff of the Safety and Occupational Health Office, we want your Holidays to be Happy and Prosperous, but mostly we want you and your family to be safe and healthy.

Merry Christmas!



Be one of the first 5 full time employees or 10 M-Day personnel to e-mail the State Safety Technician with the names of Santa's eight reindeer. There may be a stocking stuffer in store for you.



The signs are all around.
It's up to YOU to recognize and act on them.

**Training, Discipline
and Standards**

Training, discipline and standards are the bedrock of our Army, and as Soldiers, you've been taught what right looks like. As leaders, you have a duty and a responsibility to maintain standards in your formation. You also have an obligation to your Soldiers and their families to manage risk and take action to correct problems. In our fight against accidental fatalities, knowledge is the weapon of choice.

KNOW WHAT'S RIGHT
**know the
signs**
DO WHAT'S RIGHT



ARMY STRONG:



<https://safety.army.mil>